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Number I

## ORGANIZING A NEW STAFF

By

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To organize a new staff one does not merely select a group of boys and girls and then say to one, "You will be editor - in - chief." and to another, "You will be sports editor."

No, the process is not as simple a matter as that. In fact, the steps involved in selecting and organizing a staff that can function with skill and can edit a paper worthy of the school which it represents are so many and varied that a teacher often hesitates before accepting this responsibility.

Not only must the ways to accomplish the work necessary to publish a credible paper be considered, but also, qualifications of the advisor who is selected to head the staff, qualifications of pupils chosen, and benefits those pupils will derive from the work.

Knowledge of the purposes of the school newspaper, and understanding as to how best to secure the cooperation of the faculty and how to inspire the group are points necessary for the advisor's consideration.

Qualifications of the advisor who is to head the staff must be carefully considered for "As she is so will the staff be."

For many years, and the condition still exists in a number of schools, any member of the faculty who happened to have a light schedule or a vacant period, or who was willing to assume extra duties, was asked to supervise the school newspaper or yearbook. She was not necessarily an English or Social Studies teacher. Usually she had had no special training in journalism; she did not know the first steps in editing a paper.

Today, however, such strides have been made in the editing of secondary school publications, due, to a great extent, to the influence and encouragement

of state and national high school press associations, that the administration accepts the responsibility of naming a qualified teacher for this position.

The adviser may have majored in journalism work in college, and preferably some training on high school and college publications. Work on a professional newspaper adds to her efficiency.

Aside from her professional training, the adviser's personality is important for she is working with young people in a situation entirely different from that in the classroom.

First of all she must have a sense of fair play in order to have her staff respect her opinions and reflect fair play in their stories. She must have a goodly portion of tact in order to work with a demanding faculty, a sense of humor, a keen sense of responsibility.

She must be able to take adverse criticism gracefully and to benefit by constructive criticism, to meet people easily, to see both sides of a question, to respect the wishes of the administration, and to be willing to work overtime without monetary compensation.

A person of high ideals, she must enjoy and understand young people, must expect and be able to get only the best from them.

Qualifications of an adviser are aptly summed up in the following statement by Miss Mable Goddard, head of the English department of the Arsenal Technical High School, Indianapolis.

"She must have the ability to direct pupils so that they can carry out instructions intelligently and accurately, can meet emergencies, can develop accuracy and speed. She must have the best of principles and keep her pupils to high ethical standards in regard to publication matters. She must know Eng-

lish composition and be able to adapt her knowledge to the journalistic style. She must win pupils but be firm when occasion demands.

"She must also realize that journalistic work is bound to bring criticism and while she must be sensitive to appreciate the public wants, she must have some of that tough fiber in her nature which keeps her from being miserable when her public criticizes--often for no reason. In fact, a good journalist or supervisor of publications must be almost superhuman."

Equally necessary to be considered are the desirable qualities which a pupil who is selected for publication work should possess.

He should have an alert mind, the ability to write well, balance, a good attitude toward criticism, the right attitude toward office rulings, pride in attainment, a good scholastic record, leadership qualities, the desire to cooperate, pride in his personal appearance, and a pleasing personality.

#### Purposes of a Newspaper

When one considers the many purposes of the school newspaper, he realizes how necessary it is to have the right teacher and the right students working together to edit a paper of which the entire school can be proud.

First of all, the newspaper, as the "house organ," is a mirror of school life. It interprets the school not only to the student body but also to the home and the public by giving accounts of worthwhile accomplishments, activities, and educational advancements which present a fair picture of the day's routine.

It unites the student body by fostering school spirit and by keeping people better informed; it unites the school with the home and the community by printing series of interest to both.

Not only does it create an incentive for writing and help to develop good habits of writing but it furnishes an opportunity for the expression of student thought and opinions. Also, it serves as a history or permanent record of the school.

#### Staff Organization

It is a common difficulty to discuss the organization of a staff, for schools face individual problems which influence the method of conducting staff work.

A one-semester prerequisite course in journalism may be required before a

pupil is granted the privilege of working on the newspaper staff. Some schools open the enrollment in this course to the student body and then, at the close of the semester, select for staff those who are best qualified to do the work and seem to be most interested in it.

Other schools have the selective method of class membership, requesting recommendations in personality, character, dependability, cooperation, and other desirable traits besides a good attendance and scholarship record, before permitting the pupil to take journalism. Then, the class is definitely a preparation for staff work.

Sometimes it is necessary for the journalism class to edit the newspaper. This presents a difficult problem for the advisor who is confronted with the necessity of teaching the fundamentals of journalism while expecting the inexperienced class to edit an acceptable newspaper. Each semester she must train a new group. She must shift the positions each grade period in order to give all an equal opportunity.

In some schools a Journalism Club edits the newspaper. Any number of pupils may apply for membership, the staff being selected by the try-out elimination process.

Staffs comprised of members who have been elected to their positions in their senior class are most difficult to handle. Popularity rather than efficiency enters into the election. The advisor is confronted with the task of training the group in the fundamentals of newspaper work, when she knows that many of them are not interested in the actual editing of the paper but merely in being recognized as a staff member.

Considering all ways of membership selection, the prerequisite journalism course method seems to work the best for the desired well-balanced staff. But the teacher how the staff is selected, only those who are worthy of this distinction and who actually do the work should be permitted to continue as staff members.

Appointments, positions should be made in order and not on popularity or number of members on staff. Editors are selected by the try-out method or they may be appointed by the advisor. If the same group continues to function for two or more semesters, an acceptable method is to have the advisor and editors discuss the situation at the close of the

discuss the qualifications of the sub-  
editors and reporters, advancing them on the  
basis of ability, work accomplished, inter-  
est shown, leadership traits, and ability  
to work with others.

#### The Staff

The usually high school newspaper staff  
has two departments: editorial and business.

Heading the business staff are the  
business, advertising, and circulation man-  
agers, with the business manager holding  
the lone position.

The circulation manager has his staff  
of wrappers for mailing and his homeroom  
distributors. He must be responsible for  
the prompt distribution of each issue, the  
mailing list, both paid and complimentary,  
and the record of faculty and student sub-  
scribers.

The advertising manager has two du-  
ties: supervising the campus advertising  
during a subscription campaign and heading  
the solicitors for ads.

Comprising the editorial staff are  
the editors, rewrite men, copy desk, and  
reporters. If the advisor so desires, she  
can appoint two staffs which edit the pa-  
per on alternate weeks. Thus, while one  
staff is proof-reading, distributing its  
issues, and making plans for its next num-  
ber, the other staff is gathering news and  
making up pages. This plan gives more pu-  
pils an opportunity to fill positions which  
develop initiative, self-reliance, and lead-  
ership qualities; it also creates friendly  
rivalry, raising the standards of the paper.

When possible it is well to have page  
editors. Because they have only one page  
an issue to plan, they have more time to  
lay out the page, to edit the copy. They  
take special pride in their pages and striv-  
e for the best in copy and for variety and  
effectiveness in make-up.

A great many pupils cannot type al-  
though typewritten copy means cleaner gal-  
ley proofs, especially if the type is set  
in the school print shop. Advisors can  
arrange with commercial teachers to recom-  
mend three or four of their best pupils who,  
as staff typists, will type all copy after  
it has been edited.

#### Staff Meetings

As for staff meetings, an ideal situa-  
tion is to have the entire staff meet during  
a class period, each day in the school week.  
As nearly as possible, the group should  
function as a professional newspaper staff,  
the editors taking charge, the reporters  
getting their stories, and the advisor ser-

ving in an advisory capacity only. Al-  
though the staff meets during a regu-  
lar period it must be considered an ex-  
tra-curricular non-credit group.

Of course all work cannot be ac-  
complished during this time. It will be  
necessary for the editors to work after  
school hours, and for reporters to com-  
plete their assignments in order to meet  
the deadline.

Ordinarily, however, as an extra-  
curricular activity, the staff meets at  
the close of the school program, the en-  
tire group assembling at least two after-  
noons a week to discuss and plan the next  
issue and to make assignments.

For a smoothly working organization  
the staff should have a room which is  
used for no other purpose. If it is large  
enough, it can be arranged as a city room  
in a newspaper plant, with editors' desks  
files, typewriters, bulletin board, and  
copy desk.

Each editor should have a definite  
place at a desk or table where he can  
keep his own materials. He should be  
made to feel that he is in power, for  
the time being; and in order to be an  
efficient leader, he must take pride in  
having proper working equipment.

Even if the staff room is just a  
cubby hole under the stairs, it can as-  
sume a businesslike atmosphere with a  
desk, a file, a bulletin board. A work  
room that the staff can claim as its own,  
no matter how small, inspires loyalty  
and pride. It encourages reporters to  
return after hours to complete their sto-  
ries and to assist the editors in their  
work.

#### Keeping Files

Keeping complete news office files  
is one of the most important and most  
often neglected duties of the staff. It  
is a tedious and exacting task; it is  
routine work, requiring time that could  
be spent in more interesting way. But  
well kept files save time and effort in  
the end; are more than worth the trouble  
necessary to keep them up to date.

First of all every staff office  
should have at least two complete vol-  
umes of the year's edition of the news-  
paper, one bound for permanent records  
and the other, assembled for staff ref-  
erence. Ten extra copies of each issue  
should be filed for future demands.  
These can be kept in filing cases such  
as the library uses for unbound maga-  
zines.



If newly organized staff begins its morgue with its first issue, assigning this filing task to a designated staff member, this reference file will soon pay for itself in the saving of time and trouble.

Ordinary sized envelopes should be used. In the upper left-hand corner the title of the clippings to be filed in it should be listed; for example, senior play, Latin Club, English department, American Education Week. In the upper right hand corner should be the volume, number, and year.

Then each week, using two copies, the filer should clip the stories; mark the volume, number, and date on the back of each; and file them in their respective envelopes. Each year a new set of envelopes should be made out. The staff can have the school woodworking class make a cabinet of drawers to hold the envelopes which will be alphabetically arranged according to subject matter. Senior pictures can be filed by years in candy boxes of uniform size which can be obtained from the school candy counter or the corner drugstore.

Proofs of used cuts should be posted in a loose-leaf book which is divided according to subject matter, and numbered the number corresponding to the one placed on the cut. Cuts then can be filed in a cabinet, divided into sections as is the cut book.

A valuable reference scrapbook can be made of all newspaper stories that tell of the school or alumni activities. These should be kept by the year.

Official magazines of state and national high school press associations can be filed by years, using stiff cardboard covers with shoestring lacing.

If pupils are trained to clip interesting informational feature stories such as local, state, and national historical articles, stories about inventions, discoveries, or holidays, features about writers, philanthropists, and statesmen, from newspapers and magazines, and to mount them on theme paper, and then to file them in manila folders according to subject matter, future staffs will have a valuable source of information which will save them many trips to the library.

#### School Group Cooperation

The greater the number of pupils who take part in the publishing or selling of the school paper, the more interested the student body will be in their "house-organ," the more truly representative of the school it will be.

Because it is difficult to supervise too large a staff, departments of the school can be called upon to assist with the work.

First of all, the good will of the faculty must be sought; teachers must have confidence in the editors, must know that they will verify all stories that are printed. In order to get this confidence, editors must insist that reporters have information in their stories confirmed by the teacher concerned before turning in the story.

The Printing department often prints the newspaper. It also can be asked to print business and staff forms, letterhead paper, and other necessary staff needs. The Art department can furnish drawings on request, make subscription campaign posters, and help with the mounting of pictures.

A class in photography can take pictures, the list of suggested subjects to be furnished by the editor; typing classes can assist in typing copy if typists are not included in the staff or they can mimeograph bulletins needed to be sent to home rooms or departments.

Agents can be appointed in each home room to form the sales staff during a subscription campaign or a salesmanship class can handle the sales.

Advertising classes should be called upon to solicit and write ads for the paper and to handle the campus advertising for subscription campaigns.

In order to interest the English department the staff can ask for holiday features, informational school features, editorials, and poetry.

Another plan is to have a system of cub reporters, headed by a staff cub editor. Each English teacher appoints a cub in each class. At designated times after school hours the cub editor calls the cubs together, discusses with them the possibilities for news items, gives them lesson shoots explaining points covered in the writing of news and feature stories, and encourages them to hand in stories about their classes. The cub editor will edit them for a regular cub column to appear each week in the paper. Certificates of merit can be presented to the cubs having ten or more stories printed throughout the semester. This is an excellent means of interesting pupils in regular publications work.

### To Encourage Better Work

A number of ways can be used to encourage better staff work.

National press association magazines should be in every office and the staff should be encouraged to read and report on them.

A semester chart can be posted on which the number of lines or inches of copy each staff member has had printed in an issue are entered.

Thus, a check can be made of those who are doing the most and the least work.

Stringbooks in which each staff member pastes his published stories each week can be criticised by the adviser each grade period. The adviser can also take the reporter's folder of original copy and check with him as to improvement in style, short errors, accuracy in obtaining information, and style of writing.

Each week the editors and advisers can select the best news, feature, and sports story, the lead, and the news story with the best paragraph beginnings, mount the examples on paper, add comments as to the reason for the choice, and post them on the bulletin board. Staff members strive for this public acknowledgement of their work.

Whether staff members should receive awards for their work is a matter of personal opinion. Should pupils be encouraged to work for material awards or for the joy of being of service to their school, of being recognized as a member of an outstanding school group?

Some staffs not only keep an accurate record of the number of inches printed, but also of the amount of service rendered, and voluntary time spent in other departments of the staff. At the close of the semester those who have the highest point counts receive pins or other awards.

Other staffs feel that it is a privilege and a distinction to be a member of the group; that the advancement in position each semester, because of meritorious work, is a sufficient reward.

Staff loyalty and staff pride can be fostered to such an extent that members are willing to spend the maximum of time and effort without expecting material awards. They are proud to have their classmates, their teachers, and their friends know that they have been selected for membership in this extra-curricular group.

Special pins can be worn by seniors on staff. If these are little recognition pins, they will be worn by the pupils long after they have been graduated. Press cards can be given to all staff members to give them access to a building during class periods or to serve as a means of introduction.

A Christmas party and a spring luncheon at school can be given for the staff. Merit citations for outstanding work can be entered on the pupil's permanent office record.

Staff members should realize that a great many valuable lessons can be learned by participating in publications work.

They learn the joy of working together for a common cause; to cooperate, not only with each other but also with the faculty and the administration; to know what it really means to accept responsibility.

Through interviewing, they learn to meet people easily and to converse naturally; they develop poise.

They develop the right attitude toward work, the full joy that can be found in seeing a task well done, they have definite proof of their efforts, and they know that they are rendering a great service to their school.

Advisers have the privilege of working with and guiding an exceptionally high type of boys and girls, and of knowing that these young people are learning lessons which will serve them through life for as "accuracy and fair play sum up the law of journalism" so do they sum up the law of right living.

Notes

THE 18th ANNUAL CONVENTION of the Columbia Scholastic Press Association will be held at Columbia University, N.Y., on March 12-13-14, 1942. The Annual Newspaper and Magazine Critique and Contest for 1942 will take place at that time. The deadline for newspaper entries

is January 14. For magazines and elementary publications the deadline is February 4. Plans should be made now to submit your publication on time. Announcements and entry forms will be mailed to all members early in December.

The Syllabus Committee reports that work on the coming publication is now nearing completion and that copy will soon be sent to the printers for publication. Announcement of the exact date of publication will be made in an early issue of the SCHOOL PRESS REVIEW. All advisers who are members in good standing of the C.S.P.A.A. will receive copies of the syllabus gratis.

The committee met at Philadelphia on October 11 and in New York on November 1. A third meeting is scheduled for November 22, also in New York. Lambert Greenawalt is director of the group.

As the result of a letter issued to ex-members by Miss Helen M-E. McCarthy, President of the Advisers Association, membership in this group has increased to 859 with renewals still coming in daily. The Director of the C.S.P.A. has had stencils cut for the Advisers mailing list. This will reduce considerably mailing cost for issuing the Bulletins, notices, etc.

Secretaries and Directors of school press associations are invited to send the dates and places of their meetings to the Editor of the SCHOOL PRESS REVIEW for inclusion in "Coming Events". Reports of the meetings will be published under, "With The Press Associations". School Press people are looking to the REVIEW for information of this kind and the cooperation of conference officials is earnestly desired.

A number of interesting suggestions were sent in by Advisers on the return cards of the November 1 Conference. Among them:

"Get more articles on editorial and business problems in the REVIEW; recognize the Mid-West (loss of the East), and have loss poetry"--J.B.

"Communication with the Association of Private Camps to get further camp entries and establish an active camp division in the Association"--G.R.

(Editors Note: Something is already being done along this line and results will be published in an early REVIEW)

"Any chance of holding the C.S. P.A. Conventions in the Summer Time?"GS

Remember when you enter your publication for the 1942 Critique:

1. Entries must be made on a special Form provided for the purpose.
2. One publication only may be entered on each Entry Form.
3. Special editions--editions other than the regular issue--will NOT be judged in the Contest.
4. Publications should be mailed flat. Attach to package an envelope carrying first class postage in which Entry Form and fees (check or money order--do not send cash) are included.
5. Newspapers will submit two copies of each issue from the first issue after Easter holidays up to the last issue before Christmas. Elementary schools submit four copies of each issue.
6. Magazines will submit two copies of each issue from the first issue after Easter through January. Elementary schools will submit four issues.
7. Other information will be found on the Announcement and Entry Form and in the "Handbook of Information". If more information is desired, write to the Columbia Scholastic Press Association, Joseph M. Murphy, Director, 202 Fayerweather Hall, Columbia University, New York, N.Y.

The Association has issued a new "Handbook of Information", a 16-page booklet covering the history, aims, organization, membership, requirements, Contest rules and Contest Rules, as well as judging, awards, Convention information and procedure, honor keys, critical service, the Advisers Association and other information. Copies may be obtained by writing to address in No. 7 above.

In her article Miss Sengenberger says that an editor should take pride in having the right working equipment. The same, of course, applies to the whole staff. Have you supplied your student writers with STYLE BOOKS (15¢ to Members) PROOFREADERS' CARDS (Six for 25¢) and the PRIMER OF NEWSPAPER TECHNIQUE (35¢) ?

**DON'T FORGET THE 18th ANNUAL CONVENTION! March 12-13-14, 1942 at New York City**



